



Upopolis

Kids' Health Links Foundation

Connect
Build
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Empowering Youth Navigating Stressful Life Events

Social-Emotional Learning Through

Read-Alouds:

Emotional Recognition and Regulation

A How-To Guide with Sample Lesson Plans for Educators

About Upopolis and Kids' Health Links Foundation

For 15+ years, Kids' Health Links Foundation has powered Upopolis- a free and secure online community that connects youth 10 to 23 with others like them who are going through medical experiences or stressful life events. Upopolis reduces social isolation while educating and empowering youth to play an active role in managing and coping with their diagnosis, condition, or situation. To learn more visit www.upopolis.com

About this Toolkit

The social-emotional learning tool kit was designed to help educators instruct young students to develop strong emotional literacy, coping strategies and social competencies. Children will learn about healthy ways to express their emotions, solve problems and develop positive interpersonal relationships.

Our toolkit includes a read-aloud book recommendation list, thought-provoking lesson plans, learning activities, opportunities to develop and practice coping strategies, and classroom community-building ideas. Educators are provided with a material list, lesson plans and links to additional resources. The toolkit provides a flexible curriculum that can be taught as stand-alone lessons or incorporated into other subject blocks.

The social-emotional learning curriculum is research-based and created by Certified Child Life Specialists and Ontario Certified Teachers. This free toolkit was created in the

hopes of providing educators with easy-to-use resources that help to address the growing need for psychosocial education in the classroom.

Read-Aloud Book Recommendations

The Color Monster: A Pop-Up Book of Feelings by Anna Llenas

The Very Hungry Worry Monsters by Rosie Greening

When Sophie Gets Angry - Really, Really Angry... by Molly Bang

Today I Feel Silly: And Other Moods That Make My Day by Jamie Lee Curtis

The Way I Feel by Janan Cain

The Feelings Book by Todd Parr

How Full is Your Bucket? by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer

The Invisible String by Patrice Karst

Lesson One: Feelings

Body

Objective: Students will be able to identify and name basic emotions (e.g., happy, sad, angry, surprised). Students will demonstrate an understanding of how to regulate their emotions in different situations.

Prior Knowledge: Students should have a basic understanding of emotions and be able to recognize their own feelings.

Book: The Way I feel by Janan Cain

Introduction/ Minds On:

Discuss scenarios where students might feel different emotions and ask them how they would react.

Today we are going to read a story called The Way I Feel by Janan Cain. The way I feel is a story about emotions and feelings. Discuss scenarios where students might feel different emotions and ask them how they would react.

Scenarios:

1. A new student joins your class and they look nervous. How do you think this student might feel? What are some ways that you might be able to make them feel welcome?
2. A classmate is having a birthday party this weekend but you're not able to attend. How would you feel about not being able to go? What are some ways that you could express to your classmate that you appreciated being invited but won't be able to make it.
3. Your soccer team wins a game at recess. How do you feel about winning the game? What are some ways you can celebrate without making those who lost feel bad?

Read-Aloud:

The teacher will instruct students to sit as a group on the carpet. The class will identify a think-pair-share partner or triad. As a class the teacher will read the story *The Way I Feel*, pausing to show images on each page. There will be 2 opportunities for a think-pair-share during the story at the following stopping points.

1. Stop after the scared page. "What were the emotions mentioned in the story already?" (silly and scared) "Can you think of a time you felt those emotions?"
2. Stop after the frustrated page. "Can you think of something you're thankful for?"

Reading Response/ Worksheet:

Have students pick an emotion and draw a picture of themselves feeling that emotion on the feelings worksheet. Using writing prompts students can write a sentence about that feeling.

Lesson Two: Deep Breathing

Objective: Students will be able to identify the importance of deep breathing and demonstrate a variety of breathing exercises.

Introduction Minds On:

Create an anchor chart to explore both positive and negative ways we can express emotions. Introduce the idea of positive coping strategies. Explain that coping strategies are best introduced when our bodies are calm and relaxed. If we explore and practice a variety of strategies when we are calm we will be better equipped to use them when we are experiencing difficult emotions. Sometimes it takes a while to find a coping strategy we love or find works well.

For this lesson we will explore deep breathing exercises. Deep breathing is a coping strategy that helps our bodies send a message to our brains to calm down and relax. When we experience a stressful or upsetting event our bodies automatically go into something we call a "fight zone". When we are in this fight zone our hearts beat faster, our breathing becomes shallow and we might feel anxious or overwhelmed. Deep breathing helps us to pause, slow down our heartbeat and calm our bodies.

Activity:

In this lesson have students practice five-finger breathing while modelling the technique.

To begin instruct students to hold out one hand in front of themselves. With their opposite hand place their index finger at the base of the thumb. Slowly move the index finger up the thumb while taking a long slow breath in, pausing slightly at the top before breathing out slowly as you trace the other side. Repeat steps for each finger of the hand.

Explain to students that by slowing our breath we can help our bodies regulate or control our emotions. By taking deep breaths we slow down our heartbeat and have a clearer mind to make better decisions on how to respond or react.

(Include a 5-finger breathing poster)

Box breathing is a simple yet effective relaxation technique that helps to return breathing to a regular pattern after experiencing a difficult or stressful experience. Box breathing involves taking a deep breath in, pausing, breathing out and pausing again before repeating the process.

Have students draw a simple box on paper or a whiteboard. Instruct students to start at the bottom left corner, slowly inhaling while tracing the line moving upwards. When they get to the top of the box have students hold their breath while tracing the line horizontally. When students reach the top right corner instruct them to slowly exhale while tracing downwards. When students reach the bottom right corner they are then instructed to pause their breath as they trace back to the beginning. Repeat this process a few times.

(Include box breathing poster)

The last deep breathing exercise in this lesson is to stop and smell flowers on your birthday. In this exercise have students make two fists as if they are holding a flower stem in one hand and a candle in the other. Have students hold one fist up to their nose and slowly inhale as if they are smelling a flower. Then ask students to switch hands and blow out of their mouths towards their other hand as if they are blowing out a candle. Repeat 10 times.

Exit Card:

Have students vote on their favourite breathing exercise explored today. Provide opportunities to continue to practice these strategies throughout the week as body breaks or when needed.

Lesson Three: Managing Worries

Objective: By the end of this lesson students will be able to identify common worries and discuss strategies that may be helpful to manage worries.

Prior Knowledge: Students have an understanding of emotions and a variety of deep breathing exercises as a coping strategy.

Book: The Very Hungry Worry Monsters by Rosie Greening

Introduction/ Minds On:

Revisit a discussion about emotions, and explain that we have inner feelings that affect the way we think and act. Today we are going to talk about worries. Worries are feelings that often come from bad thoughts or scary 'what ifs' in our minds. When we worry we feel scared or nervous that something bad might happen.

Ensure to emphasize that worries are normal and we all experience those feelings sometimes. Worries can sometimes impact our bodies and emotions. We might physically feel like there are butterflies in our stomachs, and our hearts might race. We may even have a hard time sleeping or thinking of anything else. We might feel sad, and irritable and cry.

Ask students to think about a time that they felt worried. You may invite them to share with the class or a partner if they choose to. You may provide some examples like starting a new school year, presenting in front of the whole class or being alone.

Read Aloud:

Begin to read the story The Very Hungry Worry Monsters by Rosie Greening. After reading the story ask the students: What causes the character to worry? and What do you think the character could do to feel better? Brainstorm as a class using an anchor chart coping strategies to use when feeling worried.

Activity:

Have students draw or create their worry monsters. They can be as creative as they want. Allow students to use various crafting materials to create a worry monster that represents how they feel when they're worried. Give each student an index card to draw or write their worries on. Have their worry monster 'eat' their worry by taping it to the back. Allow opportunities for sharing.

Lesson Four: Big Emotions

Introduction/ Minds On:

Introduce emotional expression: When we are calm we are a lot like a balloon we can stretch, bend and handle lots of things that life throws at us (demonstrate by pulling a balloon not yet blown up). When we are stressed out or when bad things happen to us we start to fill up with lots of emotions. We might feel things like fear, anger, and worries (blow the balloon up with each negative emotion mentioned). Sometimes those feelings make

us feel like we might explode. When we don't talk about our feelings or have healthy coping strategies to manage our emotions they come out all over the place (let go of the balloon).

When we talk about our emotions and practice coping strategies like deep breathing, guided imagery and progressive muscle relaxation we are better able to handle those feelings or emotions and let them out little by little (slowly release some air from the second balloon).

Today we are going to read a story called The Boy with Big, Big Feelings by Brittney Winn Lee.

Materials: The Boy With Big, Big Feelings by Brittney Winn Lee, 2 balloons.

Activity:

Draw a picture of yourself experiencing a big emotion and a coping strategy that you might try to help yourself feel better.

Contact Us

For more information on Upopolis, copying the SEL Took-Kit, how to refer youth to Upopolis, and professional development offerings, please email support@upopolis.com

Refer a Youth

To refer a youth to Upopolis:

1. Visit www.upopolis.com
2. Hover over the Professional tab
3. Click Refer a Youth
4. Complete section one and three if it is your first referral (if you have already been approved to make referrals complete section two and three)
5. Youth will receive an email with a code to activate their account within 48 hours for you making the referral

Additional Notes

SEL Tool Kit and Lesson Plans cannot be copied without express written permission from KHLF

